

LIBYA: OPERATION “ODYSSEY DAWN” DAYS 4 AND 5

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Military operations continued on March 22 and 23 and are due to continue in the coming days.

1) Military Strategy

Despite some conflicting statement, it appears clearly that **the main goal of the military operation continues to be the ousting of colonel Muammar Gaddafi.**

French Foreign Minister, **Mr Alain Juppé**, told the AFP, Tuesday afternoon that **“military operations over Libya will cease when Libyan army will return to the barracks”** and that France will “take the initiative in organizing peace as it did in organizing the military intervention”.

The French Parliament was told by **Prime Minister François Fillon** that the aim of the operation is **“to deprive Libyan leader of his military superiority and give the Libyans the chance to decide on their future leaders”**.

The coalition members continue to meet problems on the key question: **“who must command the operations”**. Throughout Tuesday and Wednesday, **NATO members discussed the possible role of the Atlantic Alliance in the command and control role**, but **Turkey blocked the decision**. Mr Alain Juppé said **France will propose a new body, outside NATO, to take the responsibility of overseeing the military operations**. He said this Steering Committee will bring together foreign ministers from the participating countries including the UK, France, the U.S. and the Arab League.

Germany, which disagrees with the military option, decided to **withdraw from NATO operations in Mediterranean**. This decision concern 4 ships (including two frigates), 550 crew members and dozens of military personnel involved in radar and surveillance operations.

2) Military situation on the theatre of operations

Tuesday and Wednesday, **troops loyal to Colonel, Gaddafi launched new assault against the town of Zintan**, 160 kilometers southwest of Tripoli. Attacks were also launched, Tuesday, on the cities of **Misrata** and **Ajdabiya**. Various sources said the casualties were important, including 40 people killed in Misrata.

Libyan leader **Muammar Gaddafi** gave a speech Tuesday evening in his headquarter of Bab al-Aziziya (Tripoli). In his first public appearance in a week, he spoke to some 200 supporters and **urged “all Islamic armies” to join him**.

Wednesday, the shelling of **Ajdabiya** and **Zentan** continued.

It was said Wednesday that **snipers loyal to colonel Gaddafi killed at least three people in an Misrata’s hospital**.

Hussein al-Warfalli, commander of al-Nusur Brigade of the Libyan army was killed Tuesday near Tripoli.

Greece announced Tuesday **it will open its airspace to French jets** to allow warplanes onboard the **Charles de Gaulle aircraft-carrier** to take part in the operations over Libya.

Netherlands Defense Minister Hans Hillen said on Tuesday that **Netherlands will contribute to the international coalition** with 6 F16, 200 military personnel and a minesweeper ship.

On March 22 and 23, **the Canadian air force conducted its first strikes** on military targets in Libya.

Italy will command sea operations to enforce the Libya arms embargo, as announced Wednesday March 23.

Norway military means – 6 F16 and 100 military personnel – were in place at **Souda military base** (Crete, Greece) and ready to join the operations, it was said Wednesday.

Romania decided, Tuesday to send a frigate to the Mediterranean to participate in NATO blockade of Libyan coasts.

Wednesday afternoon the commander of the RAF component of the operation said that **Libyan air force “no longer exists as a fighting force”**.

As far as Wednesday evening, 11 nations were contributing 150 jets to the enforcement of the NFZ.

3) Diplomacy

Saudi Foreign Minister **Prince Saud al-Faisal** said Tuesday evening, during talks with British Prime Minister that **Saudi Arabia strongly supports the UN resolution and the international community efforts** to enforce it.

Following Chancellor **Angela Merkel's** statement on Monday, Germany proposed, Tuesday afternoon, an **oil and gas embargo** against Libya. Foreign Minister **Guido Westerwelle** added that **Gaddafi's regime is finished and colonel Gaddafi must go.**

Wednesday it was announced that the **European Union will impose sanctions on National Oil Company.**

United Arab Emirates former Commander in Chief said on Tuesday afternoon that its country **reconsidered its will to contribute significantly** to the enforcement of the NFZ, **due to the American and European position on Bahrain.**

Kuwait and Jordan announced Wednesday they will offer “logistical contributions” to the military operation.

On Tuesday March 22, **Brazil** called for an **immediate ceasefire** in Libya.

In **Beijing**, Foreign Affair Ministry spokeswoman **Jiang Yu** said Tuesday that China “**opposes the use of force in Libya**” because the current situation “**could cause more civilian casualties and a humanitarian crisis**”. She added China wants an “**immediate ceasefire**” and “talks to end the violence”.

In **Russia** voices criticising the military intervention continued to emerge with the pro Kremlin group **Youth Guard of United Russia (Molodaya gvardiya)** **protesting in front of several embassies in Moscow** and **Deputy Foreign Minister Gennady Gatilov** saying “**Russia has not yet received a response from the UN on its questions over how the resolution on the NFZ will be implemented**”. Wednesday afternoon, the **Russian Duma** (Parliament) called the parliaments of countries conducting military operations to call to their end.

Algerian Foreign Minister Mourad Medelci said Tuesday afternoon that the air strikes in Libya were “**disproportionate**”. Algeria along with Syria opposed the decision of the Arab League to support the implementation of a NFZ over Libya.

Al-Azhar university, the highest Egyptian Islamic authority, issued a statement, on Wednesday, **warning the United States and the United Kingdom against dividing Libya** and destroying its human and natural wealth.

Turkish Parliament Speaker Mr Ali Sahin said on Tuesday was against international law. Also on Tuesday, **President Barack Obama** and **Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan** discussed the situation in Libya. **Turkish President Abdullah Gul** said on Wednesday that **colonel Gaddafi's must “step down immediately”**. He also said that the **coalition countries have “secret intentions”**. Despite its political, position on the strikes, **Ankara offered 4 frigates, as submarine and a support ship to participate in the arms**

embargo operations on Libya. **Turkey** also accepted to act as a “**protecting power**” and represent U.S. diplomatic interests in Libya.

4) Chronology

- Wednesday evening, **the coalition bombed a compound used by colonel Gaddafi in Ajdabiya**
- Late Wednesday evening, the coalition bombed military installation in **al-Jufrah, Tajoura and Jafar**
- Wednesday evening, 8 strong explosions were heard in and near **Tripoli**
- Wednesday morning, the **coalition engaged and bombed tanks and artillery units** loyal to colonel, Gaddafi near **Misrata**
- Tuesday evening, **British and US ships and submarines** fired 20 Tomahawk missiles on air defense targets
- **A Libyan army aircraft was engaged and shot down** on Tuesday, 60 kilometers east of Benghazi
- During the night of Tuesday to Wednesday, the coalition air strikes continued, targeting **military facilities near Tripoli**, as well as the **radar installations** of two air defense bases located **east of Benghazi** and naval bases
- Military vehicles (including Russian made missile carriers trucks) were destroyed in a Tripoli Naval base
- On March 22, **French Jets onboard aircraft-carrier Charles de Gaulle** conducted their first operation over Libya
- Tuesday afternoon it was announced that an **American F15 fighter jet crashed in the rebel-controlled part of Libya on Monday afternoon**, in the eastern part of the country. The pilot and the second crewman ejected safely and suffered just minor injuries

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